

COMM 150, Writing 1
Fall 2009
COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor Information: Instructor Kim O'Hare
Office hours: See note below re Instructor Availability.
Location: Y315A
Phone: 370-3395 (office)
E-mail: ohare@camosun.bc.ca

Instructor Availability:

Assistance is available to students outside of scheduled class times, however in terms of course material, every effort should be made to clarify concepts, assignments etc. in class. Chances are if you don't understand a particular topic or element of the course, others are also going through the same thing. Ask questions in class, seek clarification. Aside from class time, office hours are posted outside my office, Y315, telephone 370-3395, ohare@camosun.bc.ca

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. **Write** news stories in a clear, concise, and appropriate style for print, broadcast and
2. internet media
3. **Write** news stories within tight deadlines
4. **Conduct** interviews and gather information that provides clear, accurate, relevant and
5. newsworthy information
6. **Assess** the news value or newsworthiness of a story
7. **Edit** and/or **respond to** editing symbols, adding and deleting information as required for
8. clarity, conciseness and timeliness

Required Materials

The following book may prove to be useful but is not essential to the course. Most of the handouts and lecture notes will be uploaded to the instructor's D2L website. If you're considering a career in journalism these are *must-have* books. It's not imperative that you have these books to complete the course. Both are available through amazon.com or can be ordered through major bookstores in town.

The Canadian Press Style Book **ISBN-10:** 0920009387

The Canadian Press Guide to Caps and Spelling **ISBN-10:** 0920009441

Course Content and Schedule

Weekly workload Class: Tuesday afternoons.

Writing forms the basis for much of what happens in mass media. Writing is a key element of every aspect of media; radio, television, internet or advertising. Writing is also an important prerequisite to production. Before production begins, someone has to get approval and funding and often that process is based on a written brief or proposal.

This course is about writing. It will emphasize journalistic writing for print and broadcast. Virtually all of the skills associated with journalism; skills such as clarity, brevity and accuracy are key elements in other forms of writing. In short, if you can write journalistically, you can write for other areas of media such as writing to persuade and writing to entertain.

What the course is not. The course is not creative writing. We will not do poetry, short stories, fiction, lyrics, screenwriting or any of the other genres. Many students have had experience writing short stories and poetry. While any past writing experience is beneficial, we will concentrate on gathering and analyzing factual information and structuring into a readable comprehensive form. During your studies in ACP you may find yourself writing a script for a drama or advertising copy, such writing is not part of Comm. 150.

A significant amount of your work will be done during scheduled class periods. Therefore it's essential that you attend all scheduled class sessions. Typically, a concept will be presented in class, following which you will do a time-limited writing assignment in class. You will also be expected to make contributions to Nexus, the student-run college newspaper.

You should also become familiar with publications such as, Monday Magazine, Seniors' Living, Island Parent and community newspapers such as Victoria News, Oak Bay News and ASaanich News. All of these publications represent opportunities to have your work published. Victoria has an abundance of special interest magazines and newspapers. They provide an opportunity for you to see your work in print, a great way to demonstrate to employers that you have potential. As deadlines are a crucial element in journalism and most other areas of media, deadlines will be stressed throughout this course. Writing exercises and assignments will all be done to strict time constraints. You will learn to write well and write quickly under pressure of a deadline.

Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)

There will be occasional quizzes or skill drills to evaluate your understanding of key concepts. This also provides feedback to the instructor to determine when those concepts have been mastered and when further clarification is needed. Aside from these quizzes, your mark will be based on a series of writing and assignments, most of which will be done during class time. All assignments not completed within the stated deadline will be penalized accordingly. There is an evaluation factor for attendance, participation and professional practice.

The marking scheme appears below:

Periodic quizzes/drills of key concepts	10%
In class writing assignments	70%
Published work* (Nexus Stories)	20%

Marks may be deducted for poor attendance, inappropriate participation, failure to demonstrate professional practice

*Published Work: Regardless of what area of media you plan to pursue for a career, you are often expected to submit samples of your work, including work which has been published. Often applications for scholarships and bursaries require published samples. To that end, you are expected to develop a portfolio of published material. Normally this would consist of clippings of actual work published and it may include comments on your work from editors for whom you have done assignments. During the semester I am available to assist you preparing stories for publication.

Grading System

Letter Grade	Description	Grade Pt	Percent
A+	Superior level of achievement	9	90-100
A		8	85-89
A-		7	80-84
B+	High level of achievement	6	77-79
B		5	73-76
B-		4	70-72
C+	Satisfactory level of achievement	3	65-69
C	Minimum Pass Level*	2	60-64
D		1	50-59
		0	0-49

Your evaluation resulting from the above evaluation scheme will be converted to letter grades based on the following table, which is the standard Camosun scheme.

**Note: Applied Communication Program students must maintain a minimum of "C" grade in all ACP courses in order to continue in the program.*

There are a variety of services available for students to assist them throughout their learning. This information is available in the College Calendar, Registrar's Office or the College web site at

<http://www.camosun.bc.ca>

ACADEMIC CONDUCT POLICY

There is an Academic Conduct Policy. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of this policy. The policy is available in each School Administration Office, Registration, and on the College web site in the Policy Section.

<http://www.camosun.bc.ca/policies/Education-Academic/E-2-Student-Services-&-Support/E-2.5.pdf>